



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

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Division of Parole and Probation, Drinking Driver Monitor Program Urges Marylanders to Drive Sober For the Holidays

National Highway Transportation Safety Administration designates December "Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month"

Baltimore, MD (December 16, 2005)--- The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) has designated December as "3-D Month", or Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. In Maryland, as holiday celebrations gain momentum, State law enforcement officers will be out December 1 - 26 to protect Marylanders from drivers under the influence.

"Lives are in danger when people who are impaired by alcohol get behind the wheel of a car," said Kendel Ehrlich, First Lady of Maryland. "Through the combined efforts of State law enforcement and drinking driving monitors Marylanders will be safer this holiday season."

The Drinking Driver Monitor Program (DDMP) monitors individuals placed on probation by Maryland's courts for drinking or drugged driving offenses. *Monitors will be available throughout the month of December for "day-in-the-life" interviews.* "In addition to monitoring an offender's sobriety, DDMP employees help local and State police as they combat impaired driving on Maryland roads by volunteering their personal time educating the public and by supporting police activities at sobriety checkpoints," states Anita Hunter, DDMP Program Manager.

In observance of 3-D Month, the DDMP will be distributing D.U.I. information to Marylanders at local grocery stores, liquor stores, businesses and bars. Additionally, the DDMP asks that Marylanders remember the lives of the victims of drunk and drugged driving by wearing white ribbons.

In 17 offices around the State, DDMP staff monitor approximately 15,000 individuals convicted of impaired driving. According to NHTSA, impaired driving accounts for more than one-third of all U.S. traffic fatalities annually; nearly 16,000 people die each year. Last year, in Maryland, 286 of the 643 traffic fatalities involved alcohol. Around the holidays, parties and other celebrations, combined with increased stress and fatigue, make drinking and driving even more common.

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